

# HAMPTON'S MAGAZINE



THE NEW BROADWAY



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**"CREAM OF WHEAT IS READY"**



# Lincoln and Booth

A CHRONICLE OF THEIR LAST DAYS

By Clara E. Laughlin

Illustrations from Photographs

HE was brilliantly beautiful, very talented, very successful, very much sought after. Although barely twenty-six years old, he had an income from his profession (that of actor) of about twenty thousand dollars a year. He was tall and full of slender grace; his features were classic in their perfectness; his big black eyes were teasing, tender, laughing, bewitching; a crown of slightly curling jet-black hair was worn pushed boyishly back from a brow of rare intellectual and physical beauty. He was elegant in his dress, blithe and winsome in his manner. Indeed, he was only too winsome—too easy to love and too hard to scold, too quick to charm and too charming to be judged. He was generous and kind, affectionate and gay. His name was John Wilkes Booth, brother of Edwin Booth, the tragedian.

At first, John contented himself with a stupendous scheme. It was a plan to seize the President of the United States, hurry him out of Washington, down through intensely disloyal counties of Maryland to the Potomac, ferry him across into Virginia, and carry him to Richmond, there to turn him over to the Confederate authorities to be held on their own terms—either the termination of the war, or the exchange of one President for all Southern prisoners held by the North. But this scheme fell through—and John evolved another.

Thursday, April 13, 1865, General Grant, who had gone modestly from Appomattox to City Point, arrived in Washington and was greeted tumultuously. That night the city was *en fête*.

Nobody knows where Booth was that evening, or that night. He was not at the National Hotel after Thursday noon, so far as anyone knows. During the afternoon he dropped in at Grover's Theater and asked Manager Hess if he were going to invite the President to the play the following night when the fall of Sumter would be celebrated. After that we

have no trace of him until about noon on Friday. He was never again seen by anyone about the National Hotel, a fact which disposes of the widely current story of his throwing his key on the counter about eight o'clock Friday night and announcing that there was to be "some good acting at Ford's" that evening.

At noon on Friday, however, he sauntered up to Ford's Theater, on Tenth Street between E and F Streets, where he frequently got mail. There was one long letter for Booth that morning, and he smiled repeatedly as he sat on the steps reading it. When he had finished, some one said teasingly—John was an excellent subject to tease, quick with his retorts but always good-natured—"Your friends, Lincoln and Grant, are coming to the theater to-night, John, and we're fixin' to have Lee sit with them."

"Lee would never do that," John replied, with spirit. "He would never let himself be paraded, like a conquered Roman, by his captors."

Then he got up, thoughtfully, and walked away.

Meanwhile, that same morning, President Lincoln went to the War Office to hunt through the telegraph files, and while he was there something was said about his going to the theater that evening. Stanton characterized the intention as "crazy," and in his blunt, grim way inveighed against it with all his might. But the President, who had never listened willingly to such cautionings, contending that to die once were far better than to die a thousand deaths through fear, felt sure that there could not now be any cause to be afraid. It had never seemed likely to Lincoln that any enemy could desire his death, since that would only leave his power in the hands of another; and of all those to whom any share of it might fall, he knew that none had half his mercy for the South. That Washington and, indeed, the whole North, not to mention the

South, was full of his enemies he had every reason to believe. He is even said by some to have been convinced that he would be assassinated. Others say he believed in a foreboding that he should die in the hour of his greatest triumph. If that apprehension were true, it is quite compatible, nevertheless, with his dislike of being constantly guarded. For he was a fatalist, he believed that what was to be, must be. "If it is to be done," he argued, "it is impossible to prevent it." So he went about his business quietly and endured only when he must the futile guardianship of a special policeman.

The Grants were to have accompanied the President and Mrs. Lincoln to the theater that night, but they had to leave for Philadelphia and in their stead Mrs. Lincoln invited Miss Clara Harris, daughter of Senator Ira Harris of New York, and her fiancé, Major Henry Rathbone.

In the early afternoon, the President and Mrs. Lincoln went for a long drive out in the direction of the Soldiers' Home. He talked to Mrs. Lincoln of what they would do when his term of office was over and they could take up a quiet life again. "We have saved some money," he said, "and ought to be able to save some more. And with that and what I can earn from my law practice we can settle down in Springfield or Chicago, and live cozily to a green old age."

After dinner, Speaker Colfax called again and brought with him Mr. Ashmun of Massachusetts. These gentlemen were shown into one of the parlors and talked briefly with the President. While they were there the card of Senator Stewart of Nevada was brought in. The Senator had taken a friend, Judge Searles, to call on the President, and in about five minutes the usher came back with a card from Mr. Lincoln, who had written:

I am engaged to go to the theater with Mrs. Lincoln. It is the kind of an engagement I never break. Come with your friend to-morrow at ten and I shall be glad to see you.

A. LINCOLN.

At the door of Captain Robert T. Lincoln's room, which was over the entrance, the President had stopped as he went downstairs and said: "We're going to the theater, Bob, don't you want to go?" But Captain Robert had not slept in a bed for nearly two weeks and he said that if his father did not mind he would rather stay at home and "turn in early." His father did not mind at all, and they parted with cheery "Good nights."

Mr. Ashmun was disappointed at the short time he had with the President, and Mr. Lincoln urged him to come back in the morning. "Come as early as nine, if you will," he said. And lest there be any difficulty about getting admittance an hour before the official day began, the President stopped at the door as he was going to his carriage, picked up a card and wrote on it:

Allow Mr. Ashmun and friends to come in at nine A.M. to-morrow.

A. LINCOLN.

This he gave Mr. Ashmun as he bade him good night, and in a minute the carriage drove rapidly away. The young sweethearts were in festive mood at the evening's prospect, and the President responded to it with much happiness in their care-free company. The play of the evening was Tom Taylor's eccentric comedy "Our American Cousin."

#### THE MOVEMENTS OF BOOTH

Some time during the lunch hour, vaguely described by everybody as "about noon," Booth went to Pumphrey's stable on C Street, back of the National Hotel, and hired a horse, for which he said he would call at four-thirty. Booth got his horse and put it up in his stable in the alley back of Ford's Theater. Between that time (probably about five) and eight o'clock in the evening we have no absolute knowledge of John Booth's movements, but he may have been in the auditorium of Ford's Theater for a while—possibly between five-thirty and six, when most of the theater employees would be at their early dinner. It was about three o'clock when the decorations of Lincoln's state box at the theater were completed, and the auditorium lapsed again into that ghostly stillness of the theater in daytime—the shadowy reaches of it full of phantom forms, the intense silence of it loud with echoes of dead eloquence. Then into the draped and decorated box stole a man! God knows who the man was—no one else does know.

He stooped down and "sighted" for the elevation of a tall man's head above the top of the rocker, and on a line with that elevation he cut in the door behind the chair a hole big enough to admit the passage of a bullet; the hole was apparently bored with a small gimlet, then cut clean with a sharp penknife. This was, presumably, in event of the assassin getting into the passageway behind the boxes and finding the doors to the boxes locked for



the distinguished occupants' safety. It was, however, an unnecessary preparation, for the lock on box 8 (in which was the President's chair) had been burst on the 7th of March when some late comers found their seats occupied.

Another thing the man did was to set one end of a bar of wood three feet six inches long against the outer door, and cut to fit the other end of it a mortise in the plaster of the passageway. There was no lock on the outer door, and this brace must be the assassin's sole protection against interference from the house until his deed was done and his leap accomplished. The passageway was a small blind alley such as is usually found leading to theater boxes. The reason the assassin would have to leap to the stage to flee was because the only other escape from the passageway was back through the crowd in the balcony.

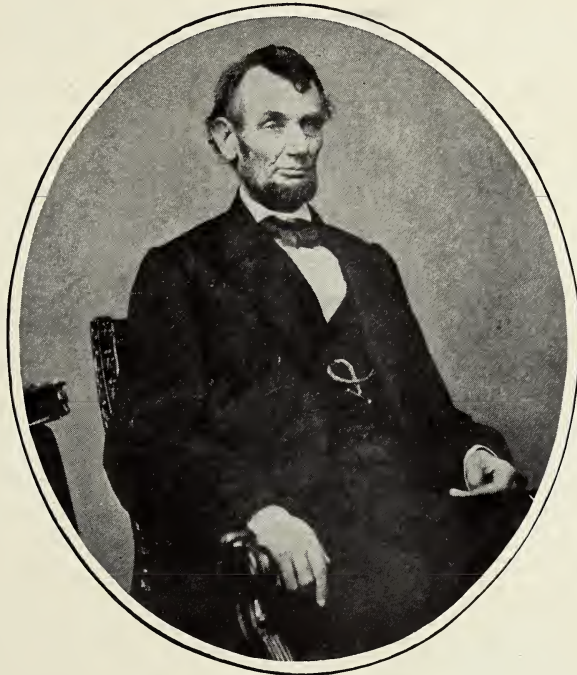
Edward Spangler, the stage carpenter, was suspected of this preparation, but the job looked less like a carpenter's than like the work of some one who had no kit of tools. There was a gimlet found in Booth's trunk at the National next day, but he was not at the National after this work was done *IF* it was done Friday afternoon. It may possibly have been done earlier when the abduction plan was uppermost and Ford's Theater was considered a likely place from which to make the seizure. No one knows; but the hole in the door was said to look as if very recently done, and the probability is that Booth himself did the work that afternoon between five and six o'clock.

#### THE PRESIDENT ENTERS

The play was well under way when the Presidential party got to the theater. The

scene on the stage as they entered represented the after-dinner hour in an English country house. The drawing-room was full of voluminously crinolined ladies whose *ennui* had just been relieved by the arrival of the gentlemen from their postprandials in the dining room. Miss Keene, as *Florence Trenchard*, was trying to explain a joke to the dull *Dundreary*. "Can't you see it?" she asked. No; he couldn't. "You can't see it?" No. There was a slight commotion as she spoke, and as *Dundreary* as-

sured her for the second time that he couldn't "see it," she looked up and saw the Presidential party entering the state box. "Well, everybody can see *that*," she said, quickly improvising and looking meaningfully at the Chief Executive as she made a sweeping courtesy. Then the orchestra struck up "Hail to the Chief," the audience cheered and cheered, and for several moments the play was at a standstill, while Mr. Lincoln bowed and smiled his appreciation of the ovation.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

From a photograph made shortly before his assassination.

When the party sat down, Mrs. Lincoln was on the President's right, Miss Harris next to her on *her* right; and nearest to the stage, sitting on the end of the sofa, was young Major Rathbone.

During the next two hours the President moved from his seat but once, and that was to rise and put on his overcoat. The night was warm; no one else seemed to feel any chill, but something that did not strike the bared shoulders of the ladies in the box, made the tall, gaunt man in black broadcloth shiver.

Between nine-thirty and ten o'clock, John Booth appeared at the stage door leading his horse, and said: "Tell Spangler to come to the door and hold my horse."

Spangler went to the stage door and explained to Mr. Booth that he could not hold his horse. "Tell Peanut John to come here and hold this horse," Spangler called. "I haven't time." "Peanuts" objected that he had his door to attend to, but Spangler said it would be all right, and if there was anything wrong about it to lay the blame on him. "Peanuts" had a bench in the alley by the door, and as he sat there on guard he held the bridle rein of Mr. Booth's horse.

#### BOOTH IN A JOKING MOOD

Now, Booth knew perfectly the situation of the play in progress; knew that in the second scene of the third act there was a brief time when only *Asa Trenchard* was on the stage and few of the other players were in the wings, awaiting cues. This was his time to strike, and it occurred about twenty minutes past ten.

After the curtain went up on the third act, Booth stepped to the front door of the theater where Buckingham, the doorkeeper—his attention being directed for the moment to something in the house—had placed his right arm as a barrier across the doorway so that none might pass without his knowledge. Some one came up behind him, took two fingers of that hand and shook them, and Buckingham turned to look. It was John Booth, smiling his boyish smile. "You don't want a ticket from me, do you?" he asked jocularly. And Buckingham smiled back at him and said he "guessed not." Booth went into the house, looked around, and came out almost immediately. When he returned to the door Buckingham was talking to some out-of-town acquaintances who were in the audience, and when the young tragedian passed him, the doorkeeper halted him and introduced his acquaintances, to whom, even in that awful hour, John made some genial remarks.

He seems to have hovered about the door, nervously, for a quarter of an hour or more. Once he asked Buckingham the time; once he asked for a chew of tobacco and was accommodated. About ten minutes past ten he went into the restaurant south of the theater and took a drink of whisky, came quickly out, passed Buckingham at the door, humming a tune as he went, ascended the stairs to the dress circle and walked down along the south wall of the theater close to the entrance of the President's box. There was no sentry at the door. No one was there. John Parker, who had gone to the theater as the

President's guard, had left his post at the door to the passageway, and gone to a seat in the dress circle, whence he could better see the play. Booth had no one to elude; no one to make pretext to; his movements were entirely unchallenged. The play waxed funnier and funnier, more and more absorbing. Every eye in the house was fixed otherwise than on that door—every eye but John Booth's.

On the stage, there was a tart dialogue going on between *Asa Trenchard* and a designing old woman, *Mrs. Mountchessington*, who presently flounced off with a taunt about *Asa's* unaccustomedness to society.

"Society, eh?" said *Asa*, looking after her. "Well, I guess I know enough to turn you inside out, you darned old sockdolaging man-trap!"

Shouts of laughter greeted this characteristic defense of "Our American Cousin," and while they were rolling across the footlights there mingled with them a sharper sound—a pistol report. Booth had stepped into the passageway, dropped the bar of wood in place to hold the door against ingress, entered the box and, shouting "*Sic semper tyrannis*," fired a Derringer pistol a few inches from the President's head. For a second or two the audience thought the shooting was behind the scenes, a part of the play; not an eye turned toward the State box where Major Rathbone was grappling with the assassin. Booth had dropped his pistol when it was fired and drawn a large knife with which he slashed Major Rathbone, striking for his breast but gashing instead the left arm which the Major thrust up to parry the blow. Notwithstanding his wound, the Major grabbed at the assassin as he was preparing to leap from the box to the stage fourteen feet below, but he was unable to hold him. All this happened in far fewer seconds than it takes to tell it, and, almost before anyone could realize that there was something wrong, Booth had jumped and fallen, his right leg doubled under him, was instantly up again and running across the front of the stage. Almost simultaneously Mrs. Lincoln's heartrending cry rang out and Major Rathbone shouted: "Catch that man!" But for a paralyzed moment, no one stirred.

#### ASSASSIN ESCAPES FROM THE THEATER

Impeded in his jump—which ordinarily would have been nothing to one of his athletic training—by Rathbone's clutch, Booth had caught his spur in the Treasury flag, gashed the frame of Washington's picture hanging



there, and broken the small bone of his left leg in the heavy fall. But he was down scarcely a moment, and before anyone in the house or on the stage could realize what he had done, he had reached the "prompt" entrance and was running through the cleared passage leading to the stage door.

Some of the spectators, when they got to thinking about it afterwards, felt sure Booth stopped in the center-front of the stage, brandished his dagger and yelled, "The South is Avenged!" Some thought he shouted "*Sic semper*" as he struck the stage; some that he shouted it as he ran. He crossed the stage some feet in front of Harry Hawk (*Asa Trenchard*), ran between Miss Keene and W. J. Ferguson standing in the passage near the prompt entrance, rushed past Withers, the orchestra leader, who was on his way to the stairs close by the back door, and as Withers stood stock-still in his way, Booth struck at him with the knife, knocking him down, made a rush for the door, and was gone.

Joseph B. Stewart, who sat in the front row on the right-hand side of the orchestra almost directly under the President's box, was the first man on the stage. He rushed after the fleeing assassin, shouting, "Stop that man!" But before anyone seemed to have sense to think of pursuit, the clattering of hoofs on the stone-paved alley had died away, and John Wilkes Booth was swallowed up in the night.

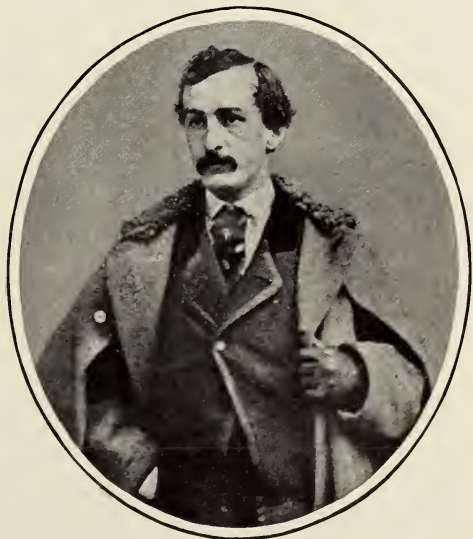
#### LINCOLN UNCONSCIOUS TO THE LAST

Meanwhile, in that upper box, the tall, gaunt man in the rocking chair had not changed his position, the smile he wore over *Asa's* last sally had not even given place to a look of pain—so lightning-quick had unconsciousness come. The head was bent slightly forward, the eyes were closed; Mrs. Lincoln had clutched his arm, but had not moved from her seat; neither had Miss Harris. At the barred door to the passageway many persons were frantically pounding, and Major Rathbone, staggering to the door, found the bar, removed it, and of those seeking admittance allowed several who represented themselves to be surgeons to come in. Another surgeon was lifted up into the box from the stage, and almost as soon as any to reach the scene of the tragedy was Miss Keene, who took the President's head into her lap.

There was a slight delay in locating the wound; some looked for it in the breast and tore open the President's shirt. Dr. Charles Taft, who had been lifted into the box,

located the wound behind the left ear, and countermanded the order just given for the President's carriage. The ride over the then cobble-paved streets of Washington was not to be thought of, and Dr. Taft directed that instead, the nearest bed be sought. He lifted the President's head and, others helping with the rest of the long, inert body, a shutter was impressed for service as a litter, and the horror-stricken little procession went along the upper lobby toward the stairs. They took the body across Tenth Street to the house of William Peterson, a tailor. At the end of the front hall was a long, narrow bedroom the tenant of which, a young soldier named Willie Clark, was not in. On the neat, though small, bed in that room the President was laid—cornerwise, as only that way could his great length be accommodated—and messengers were sent in every direction, for Captain Robert Lincoln, for the members of the Cabinet, for the Surgeon General, for the President's private physician, Dr. Stone, for his pastor, Dr. Gurley of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church.

Through the house, above the soft footfalls of those ministering to the dying, above the hushed tones of Stanton and Dana, above the sobbing of Mrs. Lincoln, sounded the incessant moaning, the stertorous breathing of the President. He was entirely unconscious; not the faintest glimmer of understanding had come to him since the bullet plowed its way through his brain.



JOHN WILKES BOOTH.  
The assassin of President Lincoln.

At a quarter before two Mrs. Lincoln went into the little room. The President was quiet then—the moaning, the struggling motion of the long arms, were over. She stayed until ten minutes after two, when she returned to her sofa in the parlor. At three o'clock she went in again for a few moments. At three-thirty-five Dr. Gurley knelt by the bedside and prayed. At six o'clock the pulse began to fall. At six-thirty the labored breathing was heard again. At seven the physicians announced signs of immediate dissolution, and at seven-twenty-two the faint pulse ceased, the last breath fluttered from between the parted lips, and Stanton's voice broke the unbearable stillness, saying: "Now he belongs to the ages."

At nine o'clock the body of the President was placed in a temporary coffin, wrapped in an American flag, and borne by six soldiers to a hearse. Then, very quietly, with only a tiny escort, moving through Tenth to I Street, the return to the White House was made. A spring rain had been falling since early morning, and the gay bunting that were so soon to be replaced with the trappings of woe, wore a bedraggled look as the hero of peace went past.

#### BOOTH'S ESCAPE

When Booth left the alley behind Ford's Theater, he fled to the Navy Yard bridge over the eastern branch of the Potomac. He got past the sentry by saying he had waited for moon-rise before beginning his ride home. Ten minutes later Davy Herold, Booth's accomplice, and possibly one of the original conspirators to abduct Lincoln, crossed the bridge, and caught up with the assassin. Booth, it must be remembered, had broken in his fall to the stage the fibula, or small bone, of his left leg, and was suffering the most excruciating torture as he rode, the splintered bone tearing into the flesh at every move. At the top of Good Hope Hill Booth and Herold turned to the right into the road to Surrattsville, Maryland, thirteen miles southeast of Washington. Some miles farther on they came to a physician's house, where the injured leg was set and the refugees were innocently given shelter. Dr. Samuel Mudd, who performed this office, was afterwards sentenced for life to the Dry Tortugas, a barren fortified island off the Florida coast.

The next day the two men rode away, although Booth was hobbling painfully. They made for the house of a Colonel Samuel Cox, known as a strong Southern sympathizer. The Colonel, however, had heard of the

assassination and refused to take in the strangers. This forced them to seek shelter in a gully on the Cox farm. There they were found by Cox on Sunday—Easter Sunday—morning. Booth immediately disclosed his identity and threw himself upon the older man's mercy.

#### ASSASSIN EXPECTED TO BE PRAISED

Cox's reprehension of Booth's awful deed was the first shock the mad, misguided young murderer had, his first bitter taste of the world's malediction in the stead of that grateful praise he had so confidently expected. Colonel Cox agreed, nevertheless, to give them the protection he had promised and he conducted them to a pine thicket about a mile and a half from his home. Returning to the house, he sent a white farm hand to Huckleberry Farm to fetch Thomas A. Jones, his foster-brother, to care for Booth. Colonel Cox directed him to the thicket and told him to give a certain whistle as a signal so he might reach the men without being shot. Herold came out of the dense pines, on hearing the whistle, and conducted Jones to where Booth lay on the ground wrapped in blankets, his face drawn with great pain. Booth asked Jones a great many questions as to what people thought of the assassination, and appeared, Jones thought, to be proud of what he had done.

"I at the time," Jones afterwards admitted, "thought he had done a great act; but great God! I soon saw that it was the worst blow ever struck for the South."

It was while Booth lay there and knew the surrounding country to be full of soldiers searching for him, that he made two entries in his little red leather-bound diary which he carried in an inner pocket and in the back of which he had the photographs of half a dozen pretty girls. He dated the first entry "April 13, 14, Friday the Ides," writing that date around the words "*te amo*," evidently of long previous inscription at some happier time when he was practicing love messages in Latin. This first entry reads:

Until to-day nothing was ever thought of sacrificing to our country's wrongs. For six months we had worked to capture. But our cause being almost lost, something decisive and great must be done. But its failure was owing to others who did not strike for their country with a heart. I struck boldly, and not as the papers say. I walked with a firm step through a thousand of his friends; was stopped, but pushed on. A colonel was at his side. I shouted *sic semper* before I fired. In jumping, broke my leg. I passed all his pickets. Rode sixty miles (*sic!*) that



night, with the bone of my leg tearing the flesh at every jump.

I can never repent it, though we hated to kill. Our country owed all her troubles to him, and God simply made me the instrument of his punishment.

The country is not what it was. This forced Union is not what I have loved. I care not what becomes of me. I have no desire to outlive my country. This night (before the deed) I wrote a long article and left it for one of the editors of the *National Intelligencer*, in which I fully set forth our reasons for proceeding. He or the gov'n—

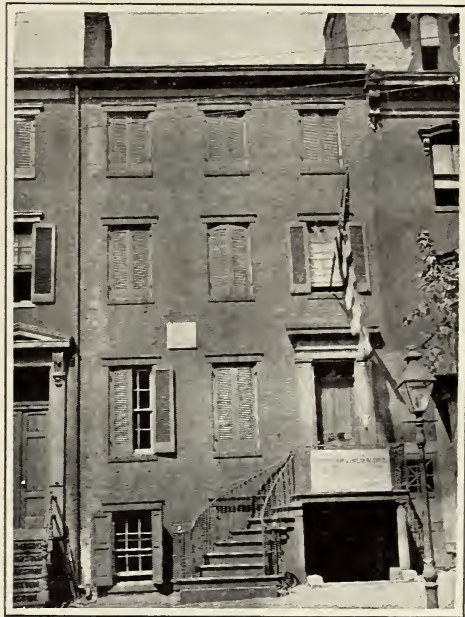
Here, either from weakness or perhaps with a sudden alarm, the diary abruptly breaks. And there is but one more entry, dated "Friday 21."

#### EXTRACTS FROM BOOTH'S DIARY

Fourteen hundred cavalymen were assembled around Port Tobacco, Maryland, and ordered to search the swamps for him; but no trace could be found. The following Friday Jones, however, overheard information which made him decide that the fugitives must be moved. Nothing could be done until after dark, and it was doubtless while waiting for this cover of the moonless night that Booth made the second and last entry in his diary. From the first sentence of this it would seem that on Thursday night Booth and Herold must have made a desperate and unadvised attempt to get away. The entry reads:

Friday, 21—After being hunted like a dog through swamps and woods, and last night being chased by gunboats till I was forced to return, wet, cold, and starving, with every man's hand against me, I am here in despair. And why? For doing what Brutus was honored for—what made William Tell a hero, and yet I, for striking down an even greater tyrant than they ever knew, am looked upon as a common cutthroat. My act was purer than either of theirs. One hoped to be great himself, and the other had not only his country's, but his own, wrongs to avenge. I hoped for no gain; I knew no private wrong. I struck for my country, and her alone. A people ground beneath this tyranny prayed for this end, and yet now see the cold hands they extend to me! God cannot pardon me if I have done wrong; yet I cannot see any wrong, except in serving a degenerate people. The little, the very little, I left behind to clear my name, the Government will not allow to be printed. So ends all! For my country I have given up all that makes life sweet and holy—to-night misfortune upon my family, and am sure there is no pardon for me in the heavens, since man condemns me so. I have only heard of what has been done (except what I did myself), and it fills me with horror. God, try and forgive me and bless my mother. To-night I will once more try the river, with the intention to cross; though I have a greater desire and almost a mind to return to Washington, and in a measure clear my name, which I feel I can do.

I do not repent the blow I struck. I may before my God, but not to man. I think I have done well,



HOUSE IN WHICH LINCOLN DIED.

though I am abandoned, with the curse of Cain upon me, when, if the world knew my heart, that one blow would have made me great, though I did desire no greatness. To-night I try once more to escape these bloodhounds. Who, who, can read his fate! God's will be done. I have too great a soul to die like a criminal. Oh! may He spare me that, and let me die bravely. I bless the entire world. I have never hated or wronged anyone. This last was not a wrong, unless God deems it so, and it is with Him to damn or bless me. And for this brave boy, Herold, here with me, who often prays (yes, before and since) with a true sincere heart, was it a crime in him? If so, why can he pray the same? I do not wish to shed a drop of blood, but I must fight the course. 'Tis all that's left me.

When the darkness permitted, Jones went to the thicket and, with Herold's help, lifted Booth to his (Jones's) horse. Then, Herold leading the horse and Jones walking a little in advance to show the way and to scout, they proceeded to Huckleberry Farm, which was about three quarters of a mile from the Potomac. From Huckleberry Farm they reached the river, pushed out in a flat-bottomed boat, and for two days cruised among the neighboring creeks, crossing to the Virginia shore on Saturday night. Sunday they stayed in the cabin of a negro named William Lucas. Monday morning early he took them in a wagon to Port Conway on the Rappahannock, where they arrived at nine-thirty. Herold asked William Rollins, the ferryman, about getting across the river and was told he would have to wait a little while, until the tide rose.

While he and Booth were waiting, three Confederate officers rode up to the ferry. They were Captain William M. Jett, Lieutenant A. R. Bainbridge, and Lieutenant Ruggles. Herold turned to Jett—they were all sitting down now in front of Rollins's house—touched him on the shoulder and, saying he wanted to speak to him, led him over to the wharf where he entreated Jett to take his "brother" and him South.

#### BEFRIENDED BY CONFEDERATES

Jett answered: "I cannot go with any man that I don't know anything about." And Herold, after a moment's thought, whispered, in great agitation: "We are the assassins of the President." Jett was confounded beyond the power of reply. He saw Ruggles at the river watering his horse and called him to the wharf. There was a consultation in which Booth presently joined, hobbling down from the house; and the upshot of it was that when the tide rose they crossed together, Booth riding Ruggles's horse.

The five men went along the road toward Bowling Green and about three miles on the way came to the comfortable farmhouse of a Mr. Garrett, who consented, on solicitation, to shelter a wounded Confederate for a day or two.

It was about three o'clock Monday afternoon when Jett—although he did not know Mr. Garrett—undertook the introduction to him of "John William Boyd" and asked Mr. Garrett to care for "Boyd" until Wednesday morning, at which time his companions would call for him. About four o'clock—shortly after Booth had been taken into the Garrett home—twenty-nine pursuers under Colonel E. J. Conger embarked on the steamer *John S. Ide* and sailed down to Belle Plain, the nearest landing to Fredericksburg, arriving at ten o'clock. From Belle Plain they galloped across country, riding all night and all day Tuesday. At three o'clock Tuesday afternoon they arrived at the Port Conway Ferry, found Rollins, showed him photographs of Booth and Herold, and learned from him that the men wanted had been ferried across the Rappahannock by him just about twenty-four hours before. Rollins said they had started for Bowling Green, in company with three Confederate officers. He was arrested and taken as guide, the river was ferried again, and about sundown the posse galloped past Garrett's, where Booth and the family were seated on the porch. Herold was there, too.

When Booth saw the troops go by, he and Herold retired precipitately to a thicket behind the barn, not venturing thence until summoned to supper. Asked why they feared the Federal troops now that the war was over, Booth said they had been "in a little brush over in Maryland" and thought best to lie low for a few days.

The Garretts suspected their guests. When bedtime came, Booth manifested strong reluctance to going upstairs, and on insisting he would rather sleep anywhere else, even in a barn, was conducted to a large tobacco house. Jack Garrett believed this sleeping in a barn was a ruse; that the strange men would get up in the night and steal their horses. So he locked them into the tobacco house and gave the key to a Miss Holloway, who boarded with the Garretts. And he and his brother went to a shed near the tobacco house, whence they could keep watch of their suspicious visitors.

It was after eleven o'clock that night when the soldiers Booth had seen passing Garrett's before sundown reached Bowling Green, surrounded the little tavern, and arrested Jett, who was in bed. Conger demanded to know where the two men Jett had crossed the ferry with were now, and Jett, very much frightened, told Conger where they were and offered to go as guide and show the way.

#### CAUGHT ON THE GARRETT FARM

At two in the morning the squad of thirty surrounded Garrett's farmhouse, and a lieutenant named Baker rapped loudly at the kitchen door. Presently the elder Garrett came to the door, in his night-clothes, and was roughly seized by Baker, who clutched the old man's throat with one hand and with the other held a pistol to his head. When Mr. Garrett could speak, he said the men were gone. Just then Jack Garrett appeared from the shed, and urged upon his father, whom Conger was threatening to hang, the need of telling the truth in the matter. A guard was left to watch the father and the rest of the posse, led by Jack Garrett, approached the tobacco house. The soldiers were stationed around the building—which was only about one hundred feet from the residence—at a distance of ten yards, with four of them at the padlocked door. The key was brought from the house, and while they were waiting for it a rustling noise could be heard within the tobacco house.

Baker spoke to the men inside, saying he



would send in one of the young Garretts to demand their surrender. To this youth he ordered them to deliver their arms; after which they were to come out and give themselves up.

#### OFFERS TO FIGHT HIS PURSUERS

Accordingly, the trembling Garrett boy was sent within, and soon returned reporting that Booth had cursed him for a betrayer and "reached down into the hay behind him" as if for a weapon, whereupon Garrett waited not on the order of his going, but went at once. Then Baker called into them that if they did not come out in five minutes he would fire the tobacco house. To which Booth replied in a ringing voice: "Who are you? what do you want? whom do you want?"

"We want you," said Baker, "and we know who you are; give up your arms and come out."

"Let us have a little time to consider," urged Booth; and this was granted.

Ten minutes went by in hushed stillness, awaiting the least sound from within. Fifteen minutes. And from within the tobacco house, not a sound. At length, the ringing voice again:

"Who are you and what do you want?"

And from Baker the reply: "We want you; we want to take you prisoners."

"Captain," said the clear voice, every tone of which was distinguishable on the gallery, a hundred feet away, "I know you to be a brave man, and I believe you to be honorable. I am a cripple: I have got but one leg. If you will withdraw your men in line one hundred yards from the door, I will come out and fight you."

Baker replied that he had not come to fight, but to capture; to which Booth said: "If you will take your men fifty yards from the door, I'll come out and fight you. Give me a chance for my life!"

Later, he offered to fight all the men singly: and when Baker again refused, the word came back: "Well, my brave boys, prepare a stretcher for me."

Some one close to the tobacco house heard Booth say to his companion: "You damned coward, will you leave me now? Go! Go! I would not have you stay with me."

Booth then came to the door and announced: "There's a man in here who wants to come out."

"Very well," said Baker, "let him hand his arms out and come."

Thereupon Herold came to the door and said: "Let me out."

"Hand out your arms," ordered Baker. "You carried a carbine and you must hand it out."

"The arms are mine," called Booth, "and I have got them. Upon the word and honor of a gentleman, this man has none. And I declare before my Maker that he is innocent of any crime whatever."

Herold was then ordered to put out his hands, they were manacled, and he was quickly dragged out, the door slammed behind him, and the easy prisoner hurried to a remote corner of the yard with a couple of cavalymen to guard him. Immediately Herold was secured, Conger went around to the corner of the tobacco house, pulled a whisp of hay through a crack, set fire to it and stuck it back. The hay was very dry and blazed almost instantly. Booth turned, when he heard it crackling, and seemed to be looking to see if he could put it out. Then, as if convinced that he could not, he started toward the door. At that moment a shot rang out. Boston Corbett, a trooper of the Sixteenth New York, had lost his head, disobeyed orders, and fired through a crack with deadly aim.

#### BOOTH WAS SHOT BY MISTAKE

"He has shot himself!" was the instant thought of everyone. Conger rushed into the barn and found Baker already there and raising Booth up. They discovered a wound in the neck, close to the back of the head, from which the blood was pouring freely. Out onto the grass beneath the locust trees they dragged him, and there they left him for dead while they went to see if the fire could not be put out. It could not, and Conger left it and returned to Booth, whose eyes and lips were moving as if he wanted to speak. He was carried to the gallery, Miss Holloway fetched a pillow for his head and dipped a rag in brandy and water to moisten his lips. Presently he was able to articulate, and Conger bent over him to hear what he might say.

"Tell mother—I die—for my—country," he gasped; "I did—what I thought—was—best."

Conger then searched the dying man's pockets and took all they contained—the diary, a knife, a pipe, a little file, a pocket compass smeared with candle drippings, a bill of exchange bought in Montreal in October, etc. Booth whispered pleadingly: "Kill me, kill me."

"We don't want to kill you," Conger assured him, "we want you to get well."

Conger then left, telling Baker that if Booth was not dead in an hour "to send over to Belle Plain for a surgeon from one of the gunships; if he died, to get the best conveyance he could and bring him on." Conger was in mad haste to get to Secretary Stanton and tell him that the reward of \$75,000 had been earned. He reached Washington at 5 P.M., and with Chief Baker went at once to Mr. Stanton to tell him the news. They thought to excite the grim War Minister for once, but they were mistaken. He took the announcement quite stolidly.

#### BOOTH'S LAST WORDS

Corbett fired about 3.15 A.M., that Wednesday, the 26th day of April. Booth lingered until half-past five; conscious to the last he must have been, said the doctors who knew the nature of the wound, and suffering the most excruciating agony a human being can know.

Toward the end, as the dawn was breaking into brilliant day, he indicated by a look, a feeble motion, that he wanted his paralyzed arms raised so he could see his hands. This was done, and he said, very faintly, as he looked at them: "Useless—useless!" Those were his last words.

They took the body to Belle Plain, where the *Idé* lay; the *Idé* arrived at Alexandria at twenty minutes to eleven that night.

A tug was there, by Secretary Stanton's orders, to meet the *Idé*; on it were Conger and Chief L. C. Baker of the Secret Service, and to it were transferred the body of Booth and the person of Herold. At a quarter to two in the morning the tug came alongside the monitor *Montauk*, anchored off the Navy Yard; and Herold was put in double irons and placed in the hold, while the body of Booth was, on Baker's orders, kept on deck under a guard.

It was about two o'clock in the afternoon when the body having been fully identified, photographed, and officially attested dead, left the ironclad. Then Chief Baker put the body into a rowboat, and the boat was rowed down the eastern branch and up the main stream of the Potomac, which bounds Washington on the south. At the foot of Four and One-Half Street, on the river, was the Arsenal inclosure. The party in the small boat steered for the Arsenal wharf, and there, at about four

o'clock, the body of Booth was landed and laid on the wharf in charge of a sentry.

During the night it was carried into one of the cellar storerooms of the old penitentiary, some bricks were removed from the floor, a grave was dug, the body was put into a gun box and covered with a blanket, the earth and then the bricks were hastily replaced, and the room was locked, the key being taken to Mr. Stanton by Major Eckert. That was where John Booth lay while rumors of his incineration, his burial at sea, his dismemberment, filled the air.

Four years later, in February, 1869, when President Johnson's permission was secured by the Booth family, Mr. Harvey, a Washington undertaker, drove out to the Arsenal grounds one afternoon and returned with the gun box containing John's remains.

The establishment of Harvey & Marr was on F Street near Tenth; and after dark on that winter afternoon the little company waiting tensely, in the back shop, heard the sound of hoofs and wheels on the cobble-paved alley, and some one said, "There they are!" and in a moment the wagon was backed into the stable. John Booth's body had come back, after nearly four years, to be confined at a spot not a stone's throw from where his flight began.

The gun box was set on trestles, in the stable, and a lantern was called for; this was the light by which the cover was pried off the box, the gray army blankets lifted, and the remains disclosed. In the next room sat the great Hamlet, his brother Edwin, waiting.

#### FATE OF ASSASSIN'S ACCOMPLICES

The identification being satisfactory—aided by the dentist who had filled John Booth's teeth—the body, in a new casket, was sent to Baltimore that night and the following day interred in the family plot at Greenmount, where it lies beneath thick ivy under the east face of the monument reared to Junius Brutus Booth by his son Edwin in 1858.

The fate of all connected with Booth was severe in the extreme: Dr. Mudd, Arnold, and O'Laughlin were sentenced for life at the Dry Tortugas, and Spangler for six years. Mrs. Suratt, Atzerodt, Davy Herold, and Lewis Payne (who tried to assassinate Seward) were simultaneously hanged until dead from the same scaffold in the prison yard at Washington.